



WOLF DEPREDATION COMMITTEE CHARTER

June 2023

Background

In 2011, the State Legislature created the Wolf Depredation Compensation and Financial Assistance Grant Program, which is administered by the Oregon Department of Agriculture (ODA).

Through this program, ODA provides pass-through grants to counties to establish and implement county wolf depredation compensation and financial assistance for preventative measures.

ODA's Wolf Depredation Compensation and Financial Assistance Grant Program complements and supports Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife's Wolf Conservation and Management Plan by working to proactively minimize wolf-livestock conflict and assist livestock producers experiencing wolf-related livestock losses.

As part of the ODA program each county in Oregon can decide to participate in the Wolf Depredation Compensation and Financial Assistance Grant Program. In order to participate the state requires that a committee be established before a grant application is submitted.

On August 31, 2022 the Deschutes Board of County Commissioners unanimously approved the formation of a Wolf Depredation Compensation and Financial Assistance Committee (hereinafter referred to as the "Wolf Depredation Committee").

Mission and Purpose

With the return of the wolf to the Deschutes County area the Wolf Depredation Committee will review grant requests for livestock managers and owners who implement livestock management techniques or nonlethal wolf deterrence techniques and/or compensation for death or injury of livestock that is attributed to wolves. The Wolf Depredation Committee will be tasked with:



1. Establishing a procedure by which persons applying for compensation will provide sufficient evidence of actual livestock and/or working dog losses attributed to wolf depredation.
2. Establishing a procedure by which persons applying for financial assistance for the cost of livestock management or nonlethal deterrence provides an estimate of the potential cost.
3. Establishing compensation rates for livestock or working dog losses from death, injury or missing all of which are attributed to wolf depredation.
4. Distributing grant program funds.
5. Preparing an annual report to ODA.

The Wolf Depredation Committee will review grant requests based on the above established procedures and provide grant recommendations to the Board of County Commissioners (BOCC). In addition, the Wolf Depredation Committee will prepare an annual report for the BOCC to review and submit to ODA.

Structure and Membership

The Wolf Depredation Committee consists of four members selected via an application process and appointed by the Board, one County Commissioner selected by the Board, and two members selected by the Committee and appointed by the Board. County staff will support the committee in the following areas:

- Meeting facilitation and communications
- Website updates and maintenance
- Provide an overview of public meeting laws and ethics, education (i.e., applicable laws and rules), technical information and memorandums, and options for decision making
- Meeting minutes

Record Keeping and Transparency

As an official public body, meeting minutes will be taken and posted on a designated website. Meeting minutes will be shared via email with all members prior to the meeting for review, and will be approved as drafted or modified by the committee at a subsequent meeting. All opinions, perspectives, and views will be captured in meeting minutes. This Charter will be posted to the project website and remain a publically available document.



Membership

The Wolf Depredation Committee is comprised of members listed in the table below.

Name	Organization / Background
Phil Chang	One County Commissioner
Ethan O'Brien	Owner or manager of livestock
Johnny Leason	Owner or manager of livestock
Sarahlee Lawrence	Supporter of wolf conservation or coexistence with wolves
Donna Harris	Supporter of wolf conservation or coexistence with wolves
TBD	County business representative
TBD	County business representative

Ground Rules and Expectations

1. Attendance: The Wolf Depredation Committee strives for full attendance at every meeting.
2. Inclusivity and Civility: Committee members are expected to create space for diverse or contradictory opinions, and support collaboration in all meetings.
3. Committee members serve at the pleasure of the BOCC and can be removed for any reason.
4. Committee members shall serve terms of two years. To develop a logical rotation of committee members, the initial members shall either serve a two year or three year term. All subsequent terms will be for two years.
5. If there is a vacancy mid-term that position shall be filled in the manner the position was appointed.

Chair

During the first Wolf Depredation Committee meeting the committee shall elect, from among its membership, a chair. No panelist shall be chair for more than two consecutive years.

Conflict of Interest



No committee member may vote upon matters coming before the committee in which they have a direct financial interest. Immediately upon becoming aware that such conflict may exist, a committee member must disclose the existence of the potential conflict to the committee, withdraw from further deliberation on the issue, and refrain from voting on the matter. Any such disclosure and withdrawal shall be fully documented in the minutes. Any other conflict of interest that does not have a direct financial interest to a committee member but pertains to the member's family or business must be disclosed and noted in the minutes, but the member may participate in the discussion and vote.

Meeting Times, Quorum, Participation, Schedule

The first Wolf Depredation Committee meeting will be scheduled in June 2023 at the Deschutes Services Building, 1300 NW Wall Street, Bend, OR. Future meeting schedules will be determined by the committee members at the initial committee meeting with a minimum of two committee meetings a year. All committee meetings will be posted on the project website and provided to committee members via email approximately one (1) week prior to each meeting.

Regular check-ins with the Board by the County Staff may occur monthly or more frequently if necessary.

A quorum (majority) of the members shall be required to make grant recommendations.

Meeting Requirements

Any public body must provide for the sound, video or digital recording or the taking of written minutes of all its meetings. Neither a full transcript nor a full recording of the meeting is required, but the written minutes or recording must give a true reflection of the matters discussed at the meeting and the views of the participants. All minutes or recordings must be available to the public within a reasonable time after the meeting, and shall include at least the following information:

- All members of the body present;
- All motions, proposals, resolutions, orders, ordinances, and measures proposed and their disposition;
- The results of all votes and the vote of each member by name;
- The substance of any discussion on any matter; and
- A reference to any document discussed at the meeting.



Because a meeting is open to the public, it means that anyone can attend. But “open” does not mean that anyone has the right to speak.

Oregon’s Open Meeting Laws

Oregon’s open meeting law (ORS 192.610–192.690) requires that decisions of any “governing body” be arrived at openly so that the public can be aware and informed of the body’s deliberations and decisions. A governing body is one with two or more members that decides for or recommends to a public body. The law applies to the state, cities and counties, and advisory bodies to those jurisdictions. Not only must meetings of city councils and boards of county commissioners be “open” – the meetings of Planning Commissions, design review boards and other appointed boards or commissions with the authority to make decisions or recommendations are also subject to the requirements. With a few exceptions, a meeting exists any time a quorum of the body’s membership is present. “Closed meetings” (or executive sessions) are allowed to discuss, for example employment, discipline or labor relations but decisions on these issues must be made at a public (open) meeting. Notice of public meetings is required, and the notice must include the time and place and principle subject to be discussed. Notice should be timed to give “reasonable” advance notice to the public. For “emergency” or special meetings, the law calls for 24 hours advance notice.